

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: August 22, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-175-Ashe-Slatt Transmission Line Corridor Maintenance)

to: William Erickson – TFP/Walla Walla
Natural Resource Specialist

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management for the Ashe-Slatt Transmission Line Corridor from Tower 16/4 to 16/5. The line is a 500kV Single Circuit Transmission Line having an easement width of 125 feet. The proposed work will be accomplished in the indicated section of the transmission line corridor as referenced on the attached checklist.

Location: The subject right-of-way is located in Benton County, WA, being in the Walla Walla Region.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: The work will include the removal of several windbreak danger trees that pose a hazard to the operation of the subject transmission line.

Analysis: Please see the attached checklist for the resources present. Applicable findings and mitigation measures are discussed below.

Planning Steps:

1. Identify facility and the vegetation management need.

BPA proposes to remove several Lombardy Poplar trees from the transmission line right-of-way in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA Standards. These trees are approaching the electrical clearance zones of the lines. BPA is clearing these trees to prevent them from falling or growing into the lines causing system outages. The work will provide system reliability.

Initial entry

The trees approaching the clearance zones have been identified. They will be trimmed to provide 35 to 40 feet of clearance from the lines. Re-planting of low growing trees will also occur.

Subsequent entry

After low growing trees are established, removal of any additional poplar danger trees, if necessary, will occur. This determination will be made during routine site inspections, which will occur 2 to 3 times per year.

Future cycles

During routine patrols, the ROW will be examined to determine if the low growing tree populations are being maintained.

2. Identify surrounding land use and landowners/managers and any mitigation.

The work site is located in an irrigated area. The subject trees are used as a windbreak to protect an orchard. Residential, urban and state/city/county land are also in the vicinity, but not in the immediate work area. Once the trees are trimmed, mitigation will involve the establishment of a low growing tree population

3. Identify natural resources and any mitigation.

A search on T-View shows that there are no species of concern or habitat within .5 miles of the work area. The Yakima River, which contains listed anadromous fish, is located approximately one mile south of the work area. No work will affect the river. Also, there are no water resources identified in the work area. No ground disturbance will occur, so no cultural resources, will be affected. Based on this, the work will not impact any natural or cultural resources, so no mitigation will be necessary.

4. Determine vegetation control and debris disposal methods.

The trees will be trimmed using manual and mechanical methods to provide 35 to 40 feet of clearance. Cut trees will be stump treated with herbicides. Tree removal is the preferred option, however a low growing tree population will be established.

Debris disposal will be by a combination of chipping, cutting into firewood quality lengths and mulching.

5. Determine revegetation methods, if necessary.

As referenced above, once the trees are trimmed, the establishment of a low growing plant community will occur. No re-seeding of grasses is anticipated.

6. Determine monitoring needs.

The site will be inspected during treatment. In addition, routine observation by BPA ground and aerial patrols will determine if any follow-up measures will be needed.

7. Prepare appropriate environmental documentation.

Besides this Supplement Analysis, no other environmental documentation should be necessary.

Findings: This Supplement Analysis finds that 1) the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and ROD, and; 2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Ken Hutchinson

Ken Hutchinson – KEPR/Walla Walla
Environmental Scientist

CONCUR /s/ Thomas C. McKinney
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 08/26/2003

Attachment

cc:

L. Croff – KEC-4
T. McKinney – KEC-4
J. Meyer – KEP-4
J. Sharpe – KEPR-4
K. Hutchinson – KEPR/Walla Walla
P. Key – LC-7
J. Hilliard Creecy – T-DITT2
D. Hollen – TF/DOB-1
R. Duncan – TFP/Walla Walla
M. Richardson – TFP/Walla Walla
G. Wilfong – TFPF/Pasco
Environmental File – KEC - 4
Official File – KEP (EQ-14)

Vegetation Management Checklist

1. IDENTIFY FACILITY AND THE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT NEED

1.1 Describe Right-of-way.

See Handbook — [List of Right-of-way Components](#) for checkboxes and the requirements for the components [Rights-of-way](#), [Access Roads](#), [Switch Platforms](#), [Danger Trees](#), and [Microwave Beam paths](#).

Corridor Name	Corridor Length & kV	Easement width	Miles of Treatment
Ashe-Slatt	74 miles 500 kV	125	<600 feet 16/4 to 16/5

Right Of Way:

Danger Tree clearing-Tree removal if needed
Other – Windbreak trees on and off of the right of way

1.2 Describe the vegetation needing management.

See handbook — [List of Vegetation Types](#), [Density](#), [Noxious Weeds](#) for checkboxes and requirements.

Vegetation Types: Orchard and ornamental trees
Other/Description - Ornamental trees –Lombardy Poplars
Density: Single Row
Other/Description – individual trees

1.3 List measures you will take to help promote low-growing plant communities. If promoting low-growing plants is not appropriate for this project, explain why.

See Handbook — for requirements and checkboxes.

Sites are in Orchard area. LGPC is not an appropriate strategy

1.4 Describe overall management scheme/schedule.

See Handbook - [Overall Management Scheme/Schedule](#).

Initial entry – Identify trees that are approaching clearance zone. Trim trees to 35-40 feet of clearance. Replant row of low growing trees.

Subsequent entry's – After low growing trees are established, removal of additional Poplar danger trees is preferred

Future cycles – Inspect to assure that low growing tree populations are maintained.

2. IDENTIFY SURROUNDING LAND USE AND LANDOWNERS/MANAGERS

2.1 List the types of landowners and land uses along your corridor.

See Handbook — [Landowners/Managers/Uses](#) for requirements, and [List of Landowners/Managers/Uses](#) for a checkbox list.

Landowners/Managers/Uses:

Residential
Rural-Orchard.
Urban
State/City/County Lands

2.2 Describe method for notifying right-of-way landowners and requesting information (i.e., doorhanger, letter, phone call, e-mail, and/or meeting). Develop landowner mail list, if appropriate.

See Handbook — [Methods for Notification and Requesting Information](#) for requirements.

BPA will contact the landowner before work begins.

2.3 List the specific land owner/landuse measures — determined from the handbook or through your consultations with the entities — that will be applied.

See handbook — [Requirements and Guidance for Various Landowners/Uses](#) for requirements and guidance, also [Residential/Commercial](#), [Agricultural](#), [Tribal Reservations](#), [FS-managed lands](#), [BLM –managed lands](#), [Other federal lands](#), [State/ Local Lands](#).

None

In the following places, trees will be replaced with a low-growing species, or treated with tree growth regulators.

Span		Landowner	Species	Replace/regulator?
To	From	Private Landowner	Poplars	Arborvitae
16/4	16/5			

2.4 Review any existing landowner agreements (e.g. tree/brush Permits or Agreements). List in table above any provisions that need to be followed and where they are located.

See handbook — [Landowner Agreements](#) for requirements.

No agreements in place.

2.5 List any known casual informal use of the right-of-way by non-owner publics. List any constraints or measure’s to take due to the informal use.

See handbook — [Casual Informal Use of Right-of-way](#) for requirements.

Windbreak is in orchard on private land. No casual use of non-owner entities will occur.

2.6 List other potentially affected people, agencies, or tribes (that are not landowners/managers) that need to be notified or coordinated with. Describe method of notification and coordination.

See handbook — [Other Potentially Affected Publics](#) for requirements and suggestions.

None

3. IDENTIFY NATURAL RESOURCES

See Handbook — [Natural Resources](#)

3.1 List any water resources (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) that may be impacted by vegetation control activities. For each water body describe the control methods and requirements or mitigation measures that will be used.

See Handbook — [Water Resources](#) for requirements for working near water resources including buffer zones.

None

3.2 If planning to use herbicides, list locations of any known irrigation source, wells, or springs (landowners maybe able to provide this info if requested).

See Handbook — [Herbicide Use Near Irrigation, Wells or Springs](#) for buffers and herbicide restrictions.

None

3.3 List below the areas that have Threatened or Endangered Plant or Animal Species and the name of the species, and any special measures that need to be taken due to their presence. Attach any BAs, T&E maps, or letters from US Fish and Wildlife.

See Handbook — [T&E Plant or Animal Species](#) for requirements and determining presence.

Yakima River is approximately one mile south of the work area. No work will affect the River.

3.4 List any other measures to be taken for enhancing wildlife habitat or protecting species.

See Handbook — [Protecting Other Species](#) for requirements.

None needed

3.5 List any visually sensitive areas and the measures to be taken at these areas.

See Handbook — [Visual Sensitive Areas](#) for requirements.

None identified

3.6 List areas with cultural resources and the measures to be taken in those areas.

See Handbook – [Cultural Resources](#) for requirements.

None identified

3.7 List areas with steep slopes or potential erosion areas and the measure and methods to be applied in those areas.

See Handbook – [Steep/Unstable Slopes](#) for requirements.

None present

3.8 List areas of spanned canyons and the type of cutting needed.

See Handbook – [Spanned Canyons](#) for requirements.

None present

4. DETERMINE VEGETATION CONTROL METHODS

See Handbook — [Methods](#)

4.1 List Methods that will be used in areas not previously addressed in steps above.

See Handbook — [Manual](#), [Mechanical](#), [Biological](#), [and Herbicides](#) for requirements for each of the methods.

Span		Methods
To	From	
16/4	16/5	Manual, Mechanical,

Herbicides: Garlon 4, 2-4-d Glyphosate Stump treat

5. DETERMINE DEBRIS DISPOSAL AND REVEGETATION

5.1 Describe the debris disposal methods to be used and any special considerations.

See Handbook — [Debris disposal](#) for a checkbox list and requirements.

Site specific prescription will include options on debris disposal see cut sheet.

Debris Disposal:

Chip limbs, fire wood cut larger items

Mulch

Other –

5.2 List areas of reseeding or replanting (those areas not already described in steps 1, 2, or 3).

See Handbook — [Reseeding/replanting](#) for requirements.

Span		Reason for Reseed/plant	Type of Seed or Plants	Native?
To	From			
16/4	16/5	To establish wind protection	Arborvitae	no

5.3 If not using native seed/plants, describe why.

Site in Agricultural area, re-seeding not necessary

5.4 Describe timing and any follow-up that will need to take place to ensure germination/success of seeding/planting.

None necessary, no re-seeding to occur

6.0 DETERMINE MONITORING NEEDS

See handbook — [Monitoring](#) for requirements.

6.1 Describe the follow-up/monitoring cycle that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the vegetation control methods used.

Right of way is reviewed 2-3 times per year to follow up with any additional high trees

6.2 Describe any follow-up or monitoring needed to determine if mitigation measures were effective.

Right of way is reviewed 2-3 times per year to follow up with any additional high trees

7. PREPARE APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

See handbook — [Prepare Appropriate Environmental Documentation](#) for requirements.

7.1 Describe any potential project impacts or project work that are different than those disclosed in the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS. Describe how those differences impact natural resources and if the differences are “substantial”.

None

7.2 Is there a need for additional NEPA documentation (i.e. Forest Service requirement, Record of Decision, supplemental EIS)? If so, attach.

No additional documentation needed.